

MARCH 1996

OPEN ARMS

VOL. 8 NUMBER 3

..... MICHIANA'S LESBIAN NEWSLETTER

MISSION STATEMENT

Open Arms exists to disseminate diverse information of interest to the Michiana lesbian community.

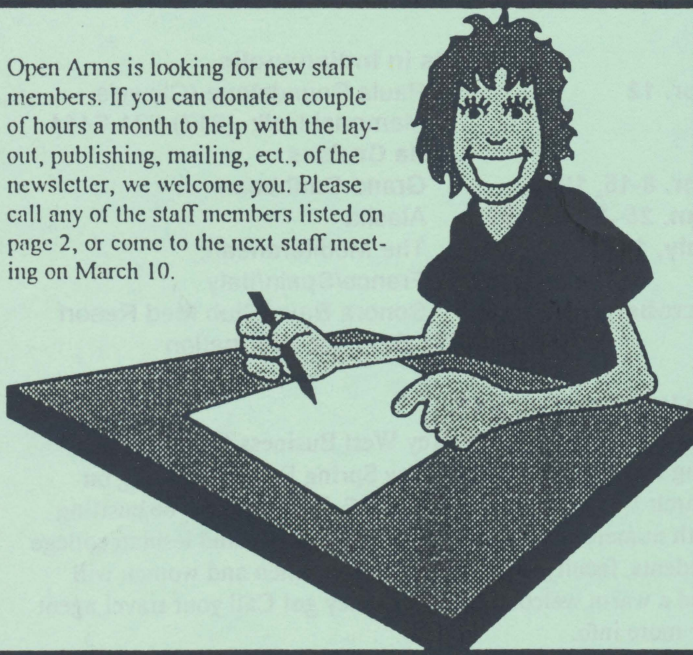
Just... what does that mean?? Webster defines "disseminate" as meaning "to spread abroad as though sowing seed" and also "to disperse widely (as in ideas)".

The Lesbian committee of the St. Joseph Valley National Organization for Women, submitted for publication in the February newsletter their 1995 consumer information poll of local businesses.

Open Arms has received both pro and con comments concerning this poll. Some wimmin like the survey because they wish to support those businesses that are lesbian and gay friendly. There are also wimmin who are clients/patients of some of the businesses that did not reply to the survey. These wimmin feel that their Doctors, Dentists, ect. are lesbian friendly, even though they did not respond to the N.O.W. survey.

Open Arms asks that you express your own opinions in a letter to tell us about any experiences, both positive and negative with local businesses that have treated you differently if they knew or suspected that you were lesbian. We will publish these letters in upcoming newsletters.

Open Arms is looking for new staff members. If you can donate a couple of hours a month to help with the layout, publishing, mailing, ect., of the newsletter, we welcome you. Please call any of the staff members listed on page 2, or come to the next staff meeting on March 10.



UPDATE ON THE MASTHEAD CONTEST

The masthead contest is off to a good start.

We have had excited wimmin notify us that they have ideas and entries to submit, but need a little more time to finalize their drawings.

We have therefore decided to extend the date of submissions through the month of March. There will be a voting box available at the upcoming March 9, dance for those entries that have been submitted to date.

Five finalists will be selected by the Open Arms staff. These finalists will be announced in the May newsletter and the new masthead will appear starting on the June newsletter.

Rules:

1. The size is limited to 2 1/2 inches by 7 1/2 inches. Smaller is okay. Must be rectangular.
2. You may submit as many entries as you wish. All will be considered.
3. All entries must be received no later than March 31, 1996
4. All winning entries become the property of Open Arms
5. Final selection of the winners are left up to the Open Arms staff.

Monetary prizes will be awarded for First and Second places.

Send your entries to: Open Arms, P.O. Box 845, Mishawaka, Indiana 46546

If you would like to wish someone a happy birthday, via the calendar on the back page, send us their first name and initial of the last name and their birth date. We will print as many as we have room for.

The upcoming presidential election is proving to be very interesting. Open Arms would like to encourage everyone to become a registered voter, as lesbian and gay rights may be dependent on who is elected into public offices in the coming year.

COMMUNITY EVENTS

LESBIAN SUPPORT GROUP

Every Tuesday
7-9 p.m.

For info, write:
LSG

P.O. Box 1612
Mishawaka, IN 46544

3RD FRIDAY OUT

Imperial Palace
5930 Grape Rd

Indian Ridge Plaza, Mishawaka
Friday, 15th, 7:00 p.m.

For reservations, call Jackie by Monday, Mar.
11th, at (219)-291-5837

EVENTS COORDINATORS

Third Friday Out: Jackie (219)-291-5837

OPEN ARMS STAFF

Sue (219)-272-3477

Kaye & Marcia (219)-271-0338
Advertising: Kaye & Marcia
Subscriptions: Kaye & Marcia

EDITORIAL POLICY

We may edit any article submitted for length or content. We ask that all articles submitted be signed and typed, but will respect the wishes of the author by not printing her name if so requested.

PLEASE TYPE SUBMISSIONS IF POSSIBLE

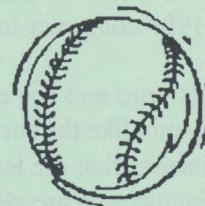
If it is possible for you to type your submissions on a letter quality typewriter or printer, please do so using a 55 space line. This will make layout much easier. Thanks.



Dinah Shore Weekend Palm Springs, California
March 28-31, 1996 World's largest dance parties for wim-
min!

Volunteer Needed

to run the 3rd Friday Out. If interested, please
contact Kaye or Marcia at 271-0338



WHISTLE STOP CAFE

Get your glove,
Get your playing spirit,
Give us a try.

*If you want to have a good time
with other wimin.....*

Call Coach Julie, 616-695-7311

UP AND COMING EVENTS

Concerts in Indianapolis

Apr. 12 Paula Poundstone (Clowe's
Memorial Hall: (317)-921-6444

Olivia Cruises

Apr. 8-15, 1996 Grand Caribbean
Jun. 25-Jul. 3, 1996 Alaska
July, 1996 The Mediteranean:
France/Spain/Italy
October, 1996 Sonora Bay: Club Med Resort
call 1-800-631-6277 for information

GAY SPRING BREAK

The 400 members of the Key West Business Guild are plan-
ning America's first ever "Gay Spring Break". Starting on
March 1 and running until April 7, This city will be bustling
with numerous events and activities for gay and lesbian college
students, faculty and staff. Young gay men and women will
find a warm welcome wherever they go! Call your travel agent
for more info.



"I WANT TO WAVE MY MAGIC WAND AND MAKE IT OKAY"

Michelle Abdill, 1953-1995



Marcy Westerling seems mild-mannered and unprepossessing until you spend five minutes in her company. She founded and directs the Rural Organizing Project, the group that has done most to connect, direct and empower the human rights activists in Oregon's isolated areas. She, too, has donated her life to the cause of human dignity. Out of that dedication has come insightful leadership that seems to effortlessly cut through divisiveness and rhetoric. She moved in with the Steeles, turning what could have been a time of hysteria and complete loss of spirit, to an opportunity for diverse communities to bond and carry forward Roxie and Michelle's work. Rumor control, group grieving, group processing, press conferences, state and nationwide communication - - Marcy has taken the energy of grief and transformed it to a force for change. For me, Marcy Westerling defines the concept of leadership.

Cherie Garland, President of the local PFLAG, told me that her husband, Jerry, has described Michelle and Roxie as their daughters - - and like sisters and mothers. "Do well by them," Cherie instructed me.

I grieve inexpressibly the loss of two who made a difference and I treasure our living heroes. Each of our lives has value beyond measure. Bill, who was the contact person for the Jackson County Human Rights Coalition. The closeted lesbian who wanted to - - but will never - - forget the murders. Because of them, I must help keep the spirits of Michelle and Roxie alive in my own work.

There is no way I can fully describe the loss of Roxie and Michelle, or adequately portray these vibrant, generous and well-loved women. Cherie Garland has given me permission to do better than that, to reprint some of Michelle's words left as footprints to follow:

"From time to time I've been thunked on the head (figuratively speaking!) and reminded that everyone walks a different path. By that I mean I've found that life is a journey and we all move on that journey in our own, very personal fashion. That includes moving at our own pace.

"Some of us have been dealing with, or 'walking with,' the knowledge that our child, parent, loved one or self is gay for a very long time. But for others this is fresh news. Sometimes it is also a fresh raw wound.

"I've experienced my own frustration when everyone I know is not as 'enlightened' (read this with tongue firmly in cheek) as myself. I want to wave my magic wand and make it okay. But it doesn't happen that way. Recently I met a wonderful parent who told me that he thinks he and his wife may be ready to try PFLAG again. I was curious about this and asked why they hadn't been ready before. He shared that the pain and confusion had just been too overwhelming to share even with a PFLAG group.

"Immediately I stiffened and wanted to say, 'But that's what PFLAG is for. A place for you to bring that pain and confusion. A place to be with people who have felt the same things.' But for once I bit my tongue and said, 'Good, I hope the time is right for you, we'd love to have you come.'

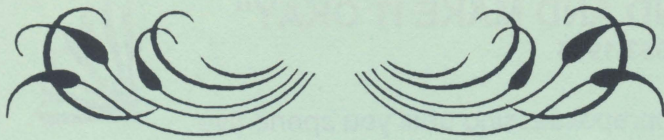
"Has PFLAG become a place only for those who are comfortable with the Gay issue? I don't believe so and in talking with him, neither did he. I believe that we all walk our own path and when the time is right we will come to a place where we can reach out and accept the hand offered to us. Let us always offer that hand, knowing we can't force people to accept it, and always be willing to listen to individual needs and concerns, knowing that not everyone walks our path.'

Michelle Abdill, Editorial. March/April 1995 Jefferson Banner, the newsletter of PFLAG of Southern Oregon and Northern California.

A Memorial fund has been established in order to create a "safe house" for lesbians and gay men. Please send donations to: PFLAG - - Abdill/Ellis Memorial Fund - - P.O.B. 13, Ashland, Oregon 97520

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This column is a continuation from the February newsletter. Michelle Abdill and Roxie Ellis were murdered in Oregon. They devoted much of their time to the gay and lesbian communities, to human rights organizations, to PFLAG, and to their church. They were well respected by both gay and straight people. They will be missed but not forgotten.



COURT OF FRIENDS

SINGLES

O.K. all you singles! Here's your opportunity to reach out to other singles. Write out what you want other singles to know about you, what you are looking for in another (be brief), and send to:

The Court of Friends

P.O.Box 1281

Niles, MI 49120

(Be sure to include your address.)

Your identity will be assigned an ID number. Your info and ID number will be published in OPEN ARMS. (It would be helpful if you would send your info early in the month so that it can be published in the next month's issue.) Also, O.A. reserves the right to edit, if necessary, for publication.

Those wishing to respond to an ID Single may do so by writing whatever you wish, putting it in a stamped, sealed envelope with the intended ID number on the front (in pencil). Place your message in another stamped envelope and mail to the above P.O.Box.

Upon receiving your message, the ID number will be replaced with the corresponding name and address and mailed. Then you're on your own. *COME ON SINGLES! Someone special wants to know you're out there!*

47 I am a 38 year old GWPF who enjoys gardening, music, sports and exercise. I am romantic, affectionate, honest and a non-smoker with an easy-going personality. I am looking for a non-smoker between the age of 38-48 who is somewhat feminine, enjoys outdoor activity, romantic dinners, sharing feelings and spending time together. If you take the time to write to me, I will write back to you.

48 I am an introspective SWPF seeking a SWPF in the 35 to 45 age category. I enjoy intellectually stimulating conversations with self-assured independent women. My interests include computers, reading, movies, music, fishing and swimming. I prefer a non-smoker. Children are ok but I am not overly fond of animals.

49 Are you fun, adventurous and free-spirited, and are you wanting to share these virtues with someone special who has them in common?

If so, and you are a professional around the age of 30, write me! I'm looking forward to getting to know you!

****I've had requests for clarification on Cap. letter descriptions. The wimin send these in and I don't know what all of them are. I would guess that S=single, W=white, P=professional. I can't guess what G equals, unless it is gorgeous. You could write to them and find out.

"I am not a glutton—I am an explorer of food.".....Erma Bombeck



And for those of you who wish to venture a little further afield in your search for that special womin, we offer the following addresses:

Golden Threads
P.O. Box 60475
Northampton, Maine 01060-0475
Send SASE for free information

The Wishing Well
P.O. Box 713090
Santee, California 92072-3090

GVCC
5250 N. Broadway
Suite 189
Chicago, Illinois 60640

DANCE, DANCE, DANCE !!!

COME ONE COME ALL

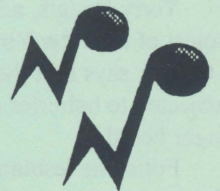
LAVENDER RHYTHM ANNOUNCES THE FIRST DANCE OF 1996

SOMETHING NEW: A POTLUCK ! From 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.
(bring a dish to pass) And from....7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. *WIMMIN*
will be displaying their crafts and wares ** Pandora's bookstore from
Kalamazoo will also be here



MUSIC &
DANCING

9:00 p.m. till 1:00 a.m.



PLACE: THE PICKWICK CLUB, 214 N. FOURTH, NILES, MICH.
DATE: MARCH 9, 1996

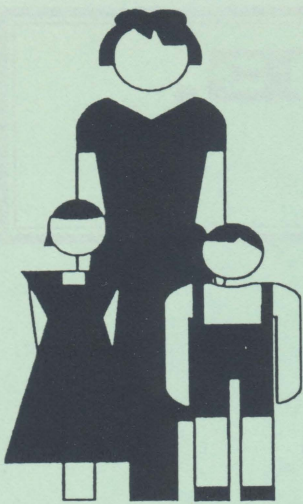
Admission for all events is \$7.00 at the door
(no advance tickets)

For more information call 616-684-7362

BYOB



Disclaimer: Lavender Rhythm is not Responsible for Alcohol Related Incidents



Michiana Momazons

Momazons is a support group for lesbians desiring children through alternative insemination and/or adoptions and with children from marriages. We meet on a monthly basis. If you are thinking about motherhood, trying to get pregnant or adopt, or already are a lesbian mother, you may be interested in participating in our group. We provide support, information sharing, resource options and great storytelling about our individual experiences as we pursue motherhood. Contact **Momazons of Michiana** P.O.Box 1002, Niles, Michigan 49120

'GAYBY' BOOM

Not long ago, lesbians seemed content to lavish their maternal instincts on their pets. Lesbians today are getting pregnant in numbers like never before.

Charlotte Patterson, a researcher on gay and lesbian families, estimates that there are anywhere from 1 to 5 million lesbian mothers in the United States, including those who have children from prior marriages.

Pacific Reproductive Services, a lesbian owned and operated business, in San Francisco, has almost tripled its clientele, -which is 90 % lesbian,- over the past five years.

Even though sperm banking is mostly unregulated, the industry has been made much safer with federal guidelines issued in 1988. They recommend that all semen samples be frozen and quarantined for six months, with donor blood tests required both before and after the quarantine.

Terry Boggis, administrator of Center Kids, the Family Project of the New York Lesbian and Gay Community Services Center, says that the old horror stories about lesbians being subjected to batteries of unnecessary psychological tests are no longer heard.

For some lesbians, sperm banks are not a viable option, because they want their children to know the father, which makes the search for a donor highly complicated and increases the prospect of a legal quagmire down the road.

A California group called Prospective Queer Parents of Berkley throw periodic "sperm-egg mixers" for lesbians and gay men who want to compare medical histories and family trees.

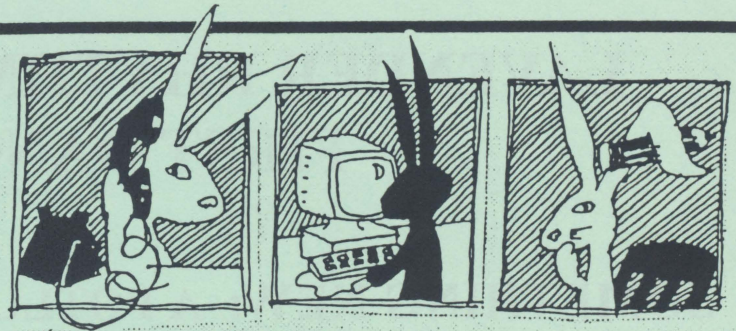
In a landmark case last year, a gay San Francisco man won legal recognition as the father of a daughter born 13 years earlier to a lesbian couple who had used his sperm. The case unnerved many lesbian families, since this man had been only minimally involved in the child's rearing.

"Biology is the trump card," explains Paula Ettelbrick, legislative counselor at the Empire State Pride Agenda, New York's lesbian and gay political lobby.

A growing international movement forbidding lesbians and single women from access to artificial insemination has been met with much opposition from gays.

Sharon Minter, a staff attorney at the National Center for Lesbian Rights says "There are already a lot of clinics and doctors in the country who won't provide services to lesbians or single women."

from the South Bend Tribune



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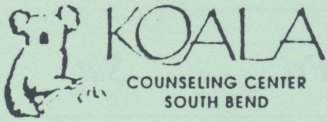
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March

1996

Sun

Mon

Tue

Wed

Thu

Fri

Sat

					1 NATIONAL WOMEN OF COLOR DAY	2
3	4	5 Support Group 7:00 p.m.	6	7	8	9 DANCE, DANCE, DANCE!!! Pickwick Club Niles, Mich.
10 Open Arms Meet- ing 6:30 p.m.	11 Reservations Due for 3rd Friday Out	12 Support Group 7:00 p.m.	13	14	15 Third Friday Out 7:00 p.m.	16 Mountain Moving Coffeehouse, Chicago 312-477-8362 Comic Karen Williams
17 	18	19 Support Group 7:00 p.m.	20	21	22	23 Mountain Moving Coffeehouse, Chicago 312-477-8362 Poet, writer, & visual artist Chris Grussendorf
24	25	26 YWCA 17th Annual Tribune to Women Awards luncheon Support Group 7:00 p.m.	27	28	29	30 Mountain Moving Coffeehouse, Chicago Memorial Service for TERRI JEWELL, the radical black lesbian activist and writer
31 PFLAG Meeting 2:00-4:00 p.m.						